

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of a certified copy of the priority document submitted on January 16, 2002.

Status of the Application

Claims 1-30 are all the claims pending in the Application, as claims 20-30 are hereby added. Claims 1-13 have been rejected.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 14-19 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicant adds new claims 20-25, which correspond to claims 14-19 rewritten in independent form. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 20-25 are immediately allowable.

Claim Rejections

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 8-11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Hirzmann* (US 6,535,394 B1; hereinafter “*Hirzmann*”), and claims 7 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hirzmann*. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has taken the position that *Hirzmann* discloses all of the features recited in independent claims 1, 8 and 13.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that *Hirzmann* fails to teach or suggest: (1) that the ground connecting member “directly resiliently contacts said compensating member,” as

recited in claims 1 and 13; or (2) a spacer that “is in direct physical contact with said compensating member,” as recited in claim 8.

Specifically, the feature alleged by the Examiner to correspond to Applicant’s claimed “ground connecting member” or “spacer” (metallic split washer 320) is clearly not in contact with casing 110 (alleged by the Examiner to correspond to Applicant’s claimed “compensating member”).

Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that the instant invention is a clear improvement over a structure such as Hirzmann’s, because: (1) the screw-based attachment of fixing post 300 is troublesome to an installer (as it requires a specific installation method); (2) fixing post 300 is separated into three distinct portions (increasing the complexity of the part); and (3) the screw protrudes through casing 100 (requiring a hole in the casing).

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8 and 13 are patentable over the applied reference. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that rejected dependent claims 2-7 and 9-12 are allowable, *at least* by virtue of their dependency.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw these rejections.

New Claims

Claims 20-30 are hereby added. Claims 20-25 are discussed above, and are believed to be immediately allowable.

Claims 26 and 27 correspond to original claims 8 and 13 rewritten to include the features of allowable claim 14. Thus, these claims are also believed to be immediately allowable.

Claims 28-30 are fully supported by at least FIG. 2 of the Application, and are respectfully submitted to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. Appln. No.: 10/046,095

Attorney Docket # Q68077

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-30 are allowable. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the application now is in condition for allowance with all of the claims 1-30.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any fees which may be required to maintain the pendency of this application, except for the Issue Fee, to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880.

Respectfully submitted,



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